

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1012 without my signature.

While well intentioned, the practical effects of AB 1012 would be devastating to school-based law enforcement officers and school administrators responsible for keeping students and staff safe in the school setting.

I believe parental involvement is an important part of ensuring a pupil's academic success. This includes informing parents when their child is involved in a disciplinary or school safety investigation. Currently, there are a number of constitutional and statutory protections that shield juveniles from excessive and unreasonable interrogations.

However, I am concerned that the procedures required by this bill are too broad and may result in a number of safety and liability issues. The requirements of this bill would apply to principals when making pupils available for any questioning by a peace officer, including cases where a pupil is a witness and where a pupil is not suspected of delinquency. These broad parameters may result in significant delays in investigation and could jeopardize the safety and security of the school and the surrounding community.

This bill assumes that an adversarial relationship should exist whenever officers interact with students. By advising students that they do not have to talk to an officer, there is an inference that the officer is an adversary who cannot be trusted. Perhaps the greatest benefit these officers can deliver is the ability to stop crime before it occurs through their proactive discussions with students. If discussions between the officers and students become too formalized, they will not take place as often. If officers cannot perform prevention activities, we are likely to see more officers on campus after the fact, after the crime, after the tragedy, instead of before when it might have made a difference.

For these reasons I am unable to support this measure.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger